

London and Middlesex Archaeological Society -- excursion
to Rochester, 26 Jun 1884

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Archaeologists at Rochester. -- The London and Middlesex Archaeological Society paid a visit to Rochester on Thursday, the members spending a very interesting and profitable day in inspecting the ancient buildings, &c., with which the city abounds. On their arrival the visitors proceeded to the Guildhall, where a meeting was held, presided over by Mr. C. Roach Smith, F.S.A., of Strood, who is vice-president of the Society, and who gave an address, in which he sketched the day's programme. He added that Rochester was the Durobrovis of the Romans, and that, were excavations made, he had no doubt, the old Roman wall could be traced all round the city, but some feet beneath the present surface. Mr. St. John Hope, third master of the King's School, then gave an account of the civic maces and regalia of Rochester, which were exhibited by permission of the Mayor. He said the largest mace, which bore the date of 1661, was 4ft. 1in. long, and one of the largest in the kingdom. Mr. Robert Ferguson, F.S.A., Mayor of Carlisle, gave an account of the institution of maces and their signification, and said the one borne before him at Carlisle was 4ft. 2in. long. After luncheon at the King's Head, the party proceeded to the Castle, which was described by Mr. St. John Hope, who denied that Bishop Gundulph was its builder, as its date was 20 years after his time. The Cathedral and <choristers were next <r cloisters> visited, and these were also described by Mr. St. John Hope. The next place of interest was Mr. Stephen Aveling's residence, The Restoration House, where Charles II. lodged on the eve of the Restoration. Finally the party proceeded to Strood and inspected the private museum of Mr. Humphrey Wickham, who possesses a most interesting and valuable collection of Saxon and Roman antiquities. After partaking of a cold collation at the King's Head Hotel, and passing votes of thanks to those to whom they were indebted for their day's pleasure, the archaeologists returned to London by train.